Graham Mace Imaging

Hints 'n Tips

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*This note is intended to provide guidance to persons wishing to embark on creation of information displaying websites (**not** e-commerce)

Why www?

Who needs a website anyway?

The answer nowadays would seem to be, everbody. The whole point of the World Wide Web is to make information available. All sorts of people have websites to display their activities to the public at large. Be it a business, a club or leisure organisation, hobby enthusiasts, artists ...., you can find examples of the whole range by looking on the internet. Not so very long ago, when somebody wanted to find out about a theatre, restaurant, folk club, library or whatever – they would probably have looked up a phone book or yellow pages. This could provide a contact phone number and maybe an address, but today people rely more on the internet, so much more information can be made available just with a few clicks with a mouse.

How do I set up a website?

There's plenty of (often free) software which you can use to make your own website, and often you can load it onto free space on your broadband provider's server. You will probably get a web address (URL) like: *http://www.phonecompany.net/~mywebsitename*, with the *mywebsitename* part of it being what they allow rather than what you want. Still, if you are confident that you can present your information in an attractive way using such programmes then all well and good. It will have cost you nothing except your time (but how MUCH time??)

   A more attractive (and professional) way to go is to pay for a hosting company to give you server space 24/7/365 and register your own domain name. This can cost as little as €70 ann ually, often with several email addresses thrown in. You either build your own site to upload to the server, if confidant to do so, or get a designer to do it for you to your requirements. You will get a neater web address this way, something like *www.myname.com*, with email addresses like *john@ myname.co, judy@myname.com, info@myname.com* etc. which helps to sort incoming mail so the right person gets to deal with it. This is handy for small businesses, clubs and interest groups etc.

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Getting a designer to build your website will be beneficial, and may not cost as much as you might think. An experienced person usually does a better and quicker job than an inexperienced one, and will be up to the mark with advice and tips to make things work better. You can get some idea about what you like from looking at websites already up and running. With this knowledge you can work out what you want to provide in terms of content and information for visitors to your website, then a start can be made.

How much does a web site cost?

The most commonly asked question, and the hardest to answer precisely. There are so many variables that it is hard to quantify on a 'one size fits all' basis.

For the simplest kind of site, with one or two pages, displaying information and limited pictorial content, the cost of designing could be as little as €100, or thereabouts. Add the cost of hosting and domain name registration and you could start up for under €200.

Cost over the year would depend on how much work would be needed to add to/upgrade your website. Obviously, more complex graphics, additional pages, sections and features or e-commerce additions will all add to the complexity and cost. But it is possible to have a smart presence on the web for quite a small outlay.

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